

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ROME 15556 01 OF 02 271650Z

43

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3840

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 15556

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER MORO

1. SUMMARY: DURING A CONVERSATION WITH PREMIER MORO OCTOBER 25 I DISCUSSED WITH HIM OUR ATTITUDES REGARDING THE FORTHCOMING IPU VISIT, ALMIRANTE'S RECENT TRIP TO WASHINGTON, THE NEED FOR CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY ORGANIZATIONAL RENEWAL AND THE PROSPECTS FOR HIS GOVERNMENT. THE MEETING WAS MOST CORDIAL AND, I BELIEVE, USEFUL IN MAKING CLEAR TO PREMIER MORO OUR ATTITUDES ON A NUMBER OF KEY ISSUES AND IN EMPHASIZING OUR DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL TO HIS GOVERNMENT AND PARTY IN ANY APPROPRIATE MANNER. END SUMMARY.

2. IPU VISIT - AT MY REQUEST, I CALLED ON PREMIER MORO OCTOBER 25. HIS DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR, MINISTER FRANCESCO VALLAURI, WAS PRESENT. I TOLD MORO I WISHED TO CLARIFY USG ATTITUDES IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT EVENTS WHICH THE PRESS HAD REPORTED IN A WAY WHICH DISTORTS OUR POLICIES. REGARDING THE FORTHCOMING IPU VISIT OF ITALIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS TO THE US, I POINTED OUT THAT THE FACT THAT WE HAVE RELUCTANTLY DECIDED TO GRANT VISAS TO COMMUNIST PARLIAMENTARIANS SEGRE AND CALAMANDREI DOES NOT REPEAT NOT MEAN A CHANGE IN OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PCI. I TOLD MORO THAT I HAD JUST SEEN ANDREOTTI ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM SECRETARY KISSINGER TO MAKE THIS SAME POINT.

3. ALMIRANTE VISIT - I TOLD MORO THAT THE OTHER DISTORTION I WISHED TO CLARIFY CONCERNS THE RECENT US VISIT OF MSI SECRETARY

SECRET

PAGE 02 ROME 15556 01 OF 02 271650Z

ALMIRANTE. I ASSUED MRO THAT THE ALMIRANTE VISIT WAS

UNINVITED AND UNOFFICIAL AND IN NO WAY REPRESENTS USG SYMPATHY OR SUPPORT FOR THE MSI PARTY. I TOLD HIM WE ARE OPPOSED TO EXTREMES OF BOTH RIGHT AND LEFT.

4. DC ORGANIZATION - IN THIS CONTEXT, I TOLD MORO OUR GOVERNMENT WANTS TO SEE THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (DC) AS THE LEADER AND THE CENTER OF THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES IN ITALY IN TRYING TO COME TO GRIPS WITH PROBLEMS OF GOVERNMENT. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS CAN ONLY BE ACCOMPLISHED SUCCESSFULLY IF THE DC IS ABLE TO REJUVENATE AND REFORM ITSELF IN ORDER TO MEET THE COMMUNIST (PCI) CHALLENGE. THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR "BUSINESS AS USUAL", I EMPHASIZED. IN ORDER TO REGAIN PUBLIC CONFIDENCE AND WIN BACK VOTES LOST TO THE PCI, THE DC MUST PUT ON A STRONG ORGANIZATIONAL CAMPAIGN. AS AN EXAMPLE, I MENTIONED THE FACT THAT I HAD HEARD THAT THE PCI HAS 500 PAID PARTY WORKERS IN THE EMILIA-ROMAGNA REGION ALONE, WHEREAS I HAD HEARD THAT THE DC HAS LESS THAN THIS NUMBER IN ALL OF ITALY. MORO RESPONDED VERY POSITIVELY TO MY COMMENTS AND RECOGNIZED THAT THE DC NEEDS A STRONGER, AND MORE EXPANSIVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFORT THAN EVER BEFORE.

5. DC PUBLIC IMAGE - I TOLD MORO THAT, IF I COULD BE PERMITTED TO SAY SO, THE DC HAD SEEMED TO FAIL IN GETTING ACROSS TO THE PUBLIC THEIR ACTUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS. AS AN EXAMPLE, I MENTIONED MY RECENT TRIP TO PADUA WHERE I HAD SEEN A VIGOROUS YOUNG DC MAYOR IN ACTION AND HAD THE IMPRESSION OF A CITY GOVERNED AS WELL AS ANY IN ITALY. HOWEVER, I READ FREQUENTLY IN THE PRESS ABOUT THE FINE JOB THE PCI MAYOR IS ALLEGEDLY DOING IN GOVERNING BOLOGNA BUT NEVER SEE A WORD ABOUT WELL-RUN CITIES WITH DC MAYORS. MORO AGREED THAT HIS PARTY HAD LAGGED BEHIND THE PCI

IN PROPAGANDA AND THAT THIS WAS ONE OF THE JOBS THE DC WOULD HAVE TO TACKLE.

6. DC PARTY SECRETARY ZACCAGNINI - I TOLD MORO THAT I HAD HAD A FINE MEETING WITH ZACCAGNINI AND THAT HE HAD IMPRESSED ME WITH HIS HONESTY, INTEGRITY, AND DESIRE TO DO A GOOD JOB. I TOLD MORO THAT I HAD READ IN THE PRESS THAT ZACCAGNINI HAD SPENT SOME TIME AT HOME BECAUSE OF AN ULCER PROBLEM AND ASKED WHETHER THIS WOULD INTERFERE WITH HIS EFFORTS AT REINVIGORATING THE

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PAGE 03 ROME 15556 01 OF 02 271650Z

PARTY. MORO SAID THAT ZACCAGNINI HAS RETURNED TO WORK AND FEELS MUCH BETTER, BUT WILL HAVE TO PACE HIMSELF IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT HIS ASSIGNMENT. THIS WILL MEAN THAT HE WILL HAVE TO HAVE SOME STRONG HANDS AROUND TO HELP.

7. US ATTITUDE - I TOLD MORO I HAD MADE MY REMARKS IN THE SPIRIT OF A FRIEND, ALLY AND PARTNER AND THAT THE US STANDS READY TO ASSIST IN ANY WAY IT APPROPRIATELY CAN. HOWEVER, AS

A FOREIGN NATION, WE CAN GIVE OUR SOLIDARITY, BUT THE JOB WILL HAVE TO BE DONE BY THE ITALIANS. MORO APPRECIATED THIS AND SAID THAT THE DC WILL HAVE TO TAKE A MORE VIGOROUS ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PCI, WITHOUT INDULGING IN "VULGAR" ATTACKS ON THEM. I ASKED MORO IF THERE IS ANYTHING WE CAN DO AS A GOVERNMENT TO BE HELPFUL. HE SAID HE COULD NOT THINK OF ANYTHING WE COULD DO AT THE MOMENT. HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT HE WOULD BEAR MY PROPOSAL IN MIND AND BE IN TOUCH WITH US SHOULD THERE BE SOMETHING OF A DEFINITE NATURE HE FELT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO.

8. 1976 LOCAL ELECTIONS - I TOLD MORO THAT I THOUGHT IT VERY IMPORTANT, PARTICULARLY FROM A PSYCHOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW, FOR THE DC TO MAKE AN ALL-OUT EFFORT IN THE 1976 LOCAL ELECTIONS (INVOLVING ABOUT A QUARTER OF THE ELECTORATE INCLUDING ALL OF SICILY AND THE CITY OF ROME) TO RECOUP THE LOSSES THEY HAD SUSTAINED ON JUNE 15. I ADDED THAT THERE WAS LITTLE TIME REMAINING TO ORGANIZE THIS EFFORT. MORO AGREED THAT THIS IS SO AND SAID THAT THE DC WOULD PUT ON A STRONG CAMPAIGN.

9. GOVERNMENT PROSPECTS - I ASKED MORO FOR HIS ESTIMATE OF THE LONGEVITY OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT. HE SAID HE COULD ONLY MAKE AN ESTIMATE WITH RESPECT TO THE GOVERNMENT'S SURVIVAL UNTIL THE DC AND SOCIALIST PARTY (PSI) CONGRESSES EXPECTED IN FEBRUARY-MARCH. HE SAID THAT BECAUSE OF SHIFTING POSITION OF THE PSI, HE COULD NOT GIVE THE GOVERNMENT MORE THAN A 60 PERCENT CHANCE OF SURVIVAL EVEN UNTIL THESE CONGRESSES.

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PAGE 01 ROME 15556 02 OF 02 271653Z

43

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3841

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 15556

EXDIS

10. UNION NEGOTIATIONS - MORO SAID THAT THINGS HAD GONE WELL SO FAR IN THE GOVERNMENT-UNION NEGOTIATIONS BUT THAT THE

DIFFICULT PERIOD, IN WHICH ACTUAL WAGE RATE INCREASES WOULD BE DECIDED, STILL LAY AHEAD. HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE EMPLOYERS ORGANIZATION (CONFINDUSTRIA) SO THAT NEITHER THE GOVERNMENT NOR PRIVATE INDUSTRY COULD BE USED AS A WHIPPING BOY FOR THE OTHER.

11. ECONOMIC SUMMIT AND EC-9 - NOTED WITH PLEASURE THAT ITALY WOULD BE A PARTICIPANT IN THE UPCOMING SUMMIT MEETING IN FRANCE NEXT MONTH. MORO EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE PART THE US HAD PLAYED IN MAKING THIS POSSIBLE. HE FURTHER INDICATED THAT THIS WOULD HELP THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION INsofar AS THE ITALIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTIES ARE CONCERNED AS IT SHOWS THE ACCEPTANCE OF ITALY AS A FIRST CLASS POWER BY THE OTHER LARGER INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS. I ALSO TOLD MORO HOW PLEASED WE ARE WITH THE FINE RELATIONS THAT HAVE EXISTED DURING ITALY'S PRESIDENCY OF THE EC AND THAT THE CONSULTATION PROCESS ESTABLISHED BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS DURING THIS PERIOD HAS BEEN EXCELLENT. VOLPE

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